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Virtue and Violence

Portrayals of Lucretia and Achilles by Giuseppe Cades

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Cover: Detail, Giuseppe Cades (Italian [Rome], 1750–1799), *The Virtue of Lucretia*, about 1774–82. Oil on canvas, 99 x 135 cm (39 x 53 1/8 in.). Toledo Museum of Art, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 2000.29.

Title Page: Detail.

Preface

In 2000, the Toledo Museum of Art acquired a rare painting by the Roman artist Giuseppe Cades (1750–1799). *The Virtue of Lucretia* is the only history painting on an ancient subject in America by Cades, a progressive artist who excelled in that genre. His pictorial skills and superb draftsmanship drew praise and envious criticism from his contemporaries. Although relatively unknown outside art historical circles, the artist is gradually regaining his once famed reputation. Anthony Morris Clark, who wrote a sensitive overview of Cades's drawing practice in 1964, urged that greater critical attention be given to Cades, an intelligent and daring personality whose work was “always graceful” and “approached nobility.”¹ Clark thought that Cades drew “too well”—a curious but illuminating observation, considering that already in 1809 the art historian Luigi Lanzi labeled Cades “a dangerous imitative talent to society.” Lanzi wrote of Cades's ability to draw so convincingly in the manner of Raphael that it fooled connoisseurs.² More recent studies on the artist by Maria Teresa Caracciolo,³ as well as the exhibition of 2000 organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, *The Splendor of 18th-Century Rome*, which included paintings and drawings by Cades, have served to highlight his impact on his artistic environment. In the Philadelphia exhibition catalogue, Edgar Peters Bowron underscored Cades's excellence, stating “[...] Giuseppe Cades turned heads with his seemingly effortless ability to paint and draw in every style from Neo-Mannerist to Baroque to Romantic, revealing along the way his inspiration from Raphael and the Roman High Renaissance, Giulio Romano and Mannerism, Veronese and the Venetians, Rubens and Van Dyck, and Guercino.”⁴

The Toledo Museum of Art has organized a focus exhibition to commemorate the acquisition of *The Virtue of Lucretia* by reuniting it for the first time in America with its pendant—*Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*, now in the collection of the Musée du Louvre, Paris. These two paintings originally hung together in a private collection in Toulouse, France. The exhibition, together with this publication, offers a study of these two works in conjunction with four exceptional drawings by Cades that also treat the themes of Lucretia and Achilles: *The Rape of Lucretia* (The Art Institute of Chicago), *The Death of Lucretia* (Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin), *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon* (Musée du Louvre), and *Achilles and Briseis* (Musée Fabre, Montpellier). This exhibition would not have been possible without the generous support of these lending institutions.

Special thanks also go to Maria Teresa Caracciolo, Chargée de recherche au CNRS, Université de Lille, for her expert advice on Cades, as well as her thoughtful contribution to this publication. Giancarlo Fiorenza, the Museum's assistant curator of European painting and sculpture before 1900, took the initiative, organized the exhibition, and produced the catalogue with the desire to promote this fascinating artist to a wider audience. He has splendidly succeeded.

Roger M. Berkowitz
Director

Foreword

Travel often registers in the fate of works of art. Determined by the selections of patrons, the fluctuations of taste, and the evolution of knowledge, the fortune specific to each work of art unfolds in at times unpredictable ways. The works by Giuseppe Cades have traveled extensively. The slow decline of eighteenth-century Roman commissions pushed artists, especially those active in the second part of the century, to produce for foreign clients. Moreover, Cades distinguished himself from his contemporary Roman painters through his independence and through his non-conformist and astonishing artistic choices—choices that prevent us today from confining him, as Giancarlo Fiorenza notes in his clever essay dedicated to the painter, to any one stylistic category. For this reason many artists who visited Cades in Rome wanted to collect works from his hand: the eccentric Johan Tobias Sergel brought a healthy group of drawings back with him to Sweden; the classicist Bertel Thorvaldsen acquired others, today conserved in Denmark; Domingos Antonio de Sequeira, a Portuguese admirer of Cades, assembled more than one hundred drawings, transferring them, along with his own collection, to Lisbon.

In France, despite the general disdain for eighteenth-century Italian painting, the baron de Puymaurin, an intelligent connoisseur, desired four paintings by Cades for his collection in Toulouse. It has not been emphasized enough that Cades was one of the rare Roman painters from the second half of the eighteenth century to have won over and fascinated a French patron. One of the Puymaurin paintings, *The Virtue of Lucretia*, has recently

left its primary historical destination to join the collection of the Toledo Museum of Art. Regrettably, the canvas today is separated from its pendant, *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*, since 1980 housed in the Musée du Louvre. Nonetheless, having discovered *The Virtue of Lucretia*, and having always followed its history (including its recent, triumphant restoration in Rome), I cannot but rejoice over its entry into the splendid collection of the Toledo Museum of Art. Cades, in fact, is not unknown to the American public. Appropriately, Toledo played host, now long ago in 1971, to the novel and stimulating exhibition *Painting in Italy in the Eighteenth Century: Rococo to Romanticism*, organized in part by the brilliant historian Anthony Morris Clark, who was among the first to highlight, with contagious enthusiasm, the quality of painting by Giuseppe Cades.⁵

To find today that spark of old enthusiasm still intact in the initiative and in the investigations of Giancarlo Fiorenza, who is devoted to the most current orientations of art historical research, confirms just how important travel is to works of art for both the advancement of knowledge and the history of taste.

Maria Teresa Caracciolo
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Virtue and Violence:

Portrayals of Lucretia and Achilles by Giuseppe Cades

In 1795, while visiting Rome, the English architect Charles Heathcote Tatham remarked in a letter that Giuseppe Cades was “the best Roman history painter.”⁶ Perhaps no other artist of his day could match Cades’s fresh and sharp response to classical history, which in the eighteenth century also embraced myth and legend. The Roman heroine Lucretia and the Greek warrior Achilles offered the artist provocative narratives with which he could display his innovative style. What follows is an examination of the artist’s approach to his ancient subjects in relation to eighteenth-century theory and practice of imitation, with regard to the interest and concerns of his various audiences. A brief introduction to the life and career of Cades will provide the foundation for this discussion.

Cades and the Cultural Environment of Rome

Jean Cades, Giuseppe’s father, was a tailor and amateur painter who originated from Saint-Orens, a village just outside Toulouse.⁷ He relocated to Rome, where he met his Italian bride and where Giuseppe was born in 1750. Cades began his artistic training under Domenico Corvi (1721–1803), a master draftsman and a chief exponent of Roman Neoclassicism. As early as 1762, and then again in 1766, he won prizes in drawing competitions at the Accademia di San Luca in Rome. Soon thereafter, Corvi expelled Cades from his studio because he resented his student’s personal and self-governed stylistic achievements.⁸ From an early age Cades secured major commissions from clientele that included Italian, French, English, and Russian elite and nobility. Fiercely independent, he was elected a member of the Accademia di San Luca only in 1786

(Fig. 1). He traveled extensively throughout north Italy, most likely in the summer of 1785, in order to study the art native to those regions and to broaden his stylistic vocabulary. During his travels, Cades carried a copy of Giorgio Vasari’s *Lives of the Most Illustrious Painters, Sculptures, and Architects* (1568) and studied first hand the works Vasari mentions.⁹ He greatly admired artists of the Venetian and Emilian Schools, notably Correggio and Guercino. In particular, he made drawings after Pellegrino Tibaldi’s mock-heroic fresco cycle of Ulysses in the Palazzo Poggi in Bologna (painted about 1555). Besides executing religious and secular drawings and easel paintings, Cades also became a highly accomplished decorator of palace interiors. His masterpiece in that genre is the pictorial cycle (1788–90) in the Palazzo Chigi at Ariccia depicting scenes from Ludovico Ariosto’s romance epic *Orlando Furioso*.

By the 1780s Cades’s reputation bloomed, and foreign dignitaries frequented his studio while visiting Rome on the Grand Tour. The architect Giacomo Quarenghi wrote to Giuseppe Beltramelli from Saint Petersburg in 1788 that “[...] a certain Giuseppe Cades, the best I left in Rome [...] would be the only one able to repair the loss of [Pompeo] Batoni”—the most celebrated artist of his age who died in 1787.¹⁰ He counted among his friends artists of the order of Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Antonio Canova, Henry Fuseli, and Johan Tobias Sergel. While Cades shared stylistic traits with his fellow artists, his own art resists placement in any one stylistic category. His prolific output reveals that Cades tailored his artistic vocabulary depending on his subject matter, medium, and audience.

Rome, where Cades spent his entire career, was the heart of classical antiquity, the seat of universal Catholicism, and the center of a profound exchange between literature and the visual arts.¹¹ The Accademia di San Luca and the Académie de France were the city's two official centers of artistic activity. Besides facilitating apprenticeships and providing an education for artists, the Accademia di San Luca approved all public works of art. Academic membership served to increase artistic status and recognition. Cades's teacher Domenico Corvi headed in various years the Accademia del Nudo, a celebrated life drawing academy. Painters, sculptors, and architects throughout Europe flocked to Rome to study antiquity together with the great



Fig. 1. Giuseppe Cades (Italian [Rome], 1750–1799), *Self Portrait*, about 1775. Oil on canvas, 65 x 50.2 cm (25 ⁹/₁₆ x 19 ³/₄ in.). Rome, Accademia di San Luca; Photo: Mauro Coen. The date in the lower right corner seems to be a later addition and reflects Cades's election as a member of the Academy.

Italian masters. Theory and practice went hand in hand. A number of artistic treatises were composed or translated and published during Cades's lifetime: among them were the first volume of Giovanni Gaetano Bottari's *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura, e architettura* (1756); Marco Pagliarini's new edition of Vasari's *Lives* with illustrations and corrections by Bottari (1759); and Carlo Amoretti's Italian translation of Johann Joachim Winckelmann's *Reflections on the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Ancient Greeks* (1779). The vibrant cultural life of Rome revolved around the Accademia dell'Arcadia, a literary academy founded in 1690 that had an enormous impact on the arts.¹² Members frequently worked together with artists on developing pictorial inventions around ancient themes.

Pendant Paintings: Provenance, Dating, and Technique

The Virtue of Lucretia (Fig. 3), together with its pendant *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon* (Fig. 2), formed part of the distinguished collection of Nicolas-Joseph Marcassus, baron de Puymaurin (1718–1791), the Syndic Général of the province of Toulouse.¹³ Although we lack documentation regarding their genesis, evidence suggests the baron de Puymaurin acquired these two works directly from Cades via one of his agents. He owned two smaller paintings by the artist, also pendants: *Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi*, dated 1776 (Musée du Louvre), and *Pontifex Maximus Among the Vestals* (whereabouts unknown). The earliest record of *The Virtue of Lucretia* and *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon* comes from the catalogue to the 1789 Exposition de l'Académie Royale de Toulouse, where the baron de Puymaurin exhibited them along with his two other paintings by Cades.¹⁴ The catalogue singles out *The Virtue of Lucretia* for its grand style ("trés-haut style"). Shortly after the patron's death, his heirs offered all four works in

a public sale in Paris in 1792, at the Salon de l'Hôtel de Ville, selling only *Pontifex Maximus among the Vestals*. The other three canvases returned to Toulouse where they remained until the late twentieth century.

A distinguished collector and patron of the arts, the baron de Puymaurin was a member of the Académie Royale des Sciences, Inscriptions, et Belles Lettres and of the Académie Royale de Peinture, Sculpture, et Architecture de Toulouse.¹⁵ He frequently exhibited examples from his collection at the arts academy, which sponsored an annual showing. As a literary scholar, he would have had a keen interest in the subject matter of Cades's paintings, a point that will be explored more fully below. His family was closely associated with the French monarchy and operated the royal cloth manufactories in Toulouse. In 1761 the baron acquired and renovated a sixteenth-century palace, the Hôtel d'Assézat, in which to display his collection of paintings, including works by Annibale Carracci, Ambroise Frédeau, Sébastien Bourdon, Willem Kalf, Antonio Verrio, and Charles-Joseph Natoire. He was also a member of the Académie Royale des Belles Lettres de Nîmes and of the Société des Arts de Montpellier. Jacques Gamelin (1738–1803), the baron de Puymaurin's bookkeeper and an accomplished artist, went to work in Rome from 1765 to 1774.¹⁶ There he entered the Accademia di San Luca and became well acquainted with Corvi and Cades, among other artists. Gamelin acted as the baron de Puymaurin's artistic agent and may have commissioned Cades to send works to Toulouse, by then a burgeoning cultural center. In fact, a painting of the Virgin by Cades, owned by M. Maury, was already on display at the 1775 Exposition de l'Académie Royale de Toulouse in the Hôtel de Ville.¹⁷ Certainly the origins of Giuseppe's father also played an important role in establishing the artist's reputation in and around Toulouse. It is also not out of the question that Cades himself traveled to France.

According to Maria Teresa Caracciolo, *The Virtue of Lucretia* and *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon* date from about 1774–82. In particular, the chronology of the Louvre painting can be situated between two important drawings by Cades of the same subject: one in the Musée du Louvre, featured in the exhibition, and signed and dated 1774; and the other in the Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid), which is signed and dated 1782. Based on stylistic analogies with other paintings by Cades, including his three canvases depicting the loves of the pagan gods (private collection, Florence), it is reasonable to endorse Caracciolo's dating.¹⁸ He uses a two-part composition for each work, separating the main protagonists spatially from one another. The intense spotlighting of the protagonists is a theatrical effect that Cades learned from such Romantic artists as Henry Fuseli, who arrived in Rome in 1770. As is characteristic of his mature works, Cades articulates form by using rapid, viscous strokes of the brush as if it were a pen. He paints the body with soft, feathery contours and a light touch. For his *Virtue of Lucretia*, Cades creates a delightfully balanced color scheme with delicate, even diaphanous, tones of blue, yellow, and lavender for the fabrics. The wispy blue tints lighten the background. The juxtaposition of iridescent pastel tints with pale and vivid hues evokes the paintings of such French artists as Jean-Honoré Fragonard and Charles-Joseph Natoire, who was the director of the Académie de France in Rome beginning in 1751. By contrast, more saturated colors, especially red, and deeper shadows appear in his *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*. The intensity of expression and deep emotional sentiment of these two pictures connect them to the achievements of foreign painters and sculptors working in Rome, namely Fuseli, Sergel, and Gamelin. Unlike his older contemporaries Corvi and Batoni, Cades varied his use of chiaroscuro for mood.



Fig. 2. Giuseppe Cades (Italian [Rome], 1750–1799), *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*, about 1774–82. Oil on canvas, 99 x 135 cm (39 x 53 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.). Paris, Musée du Louvre, Inv. RF 1980.191. Photo RMN: Jean Gilles Berizz. Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY.

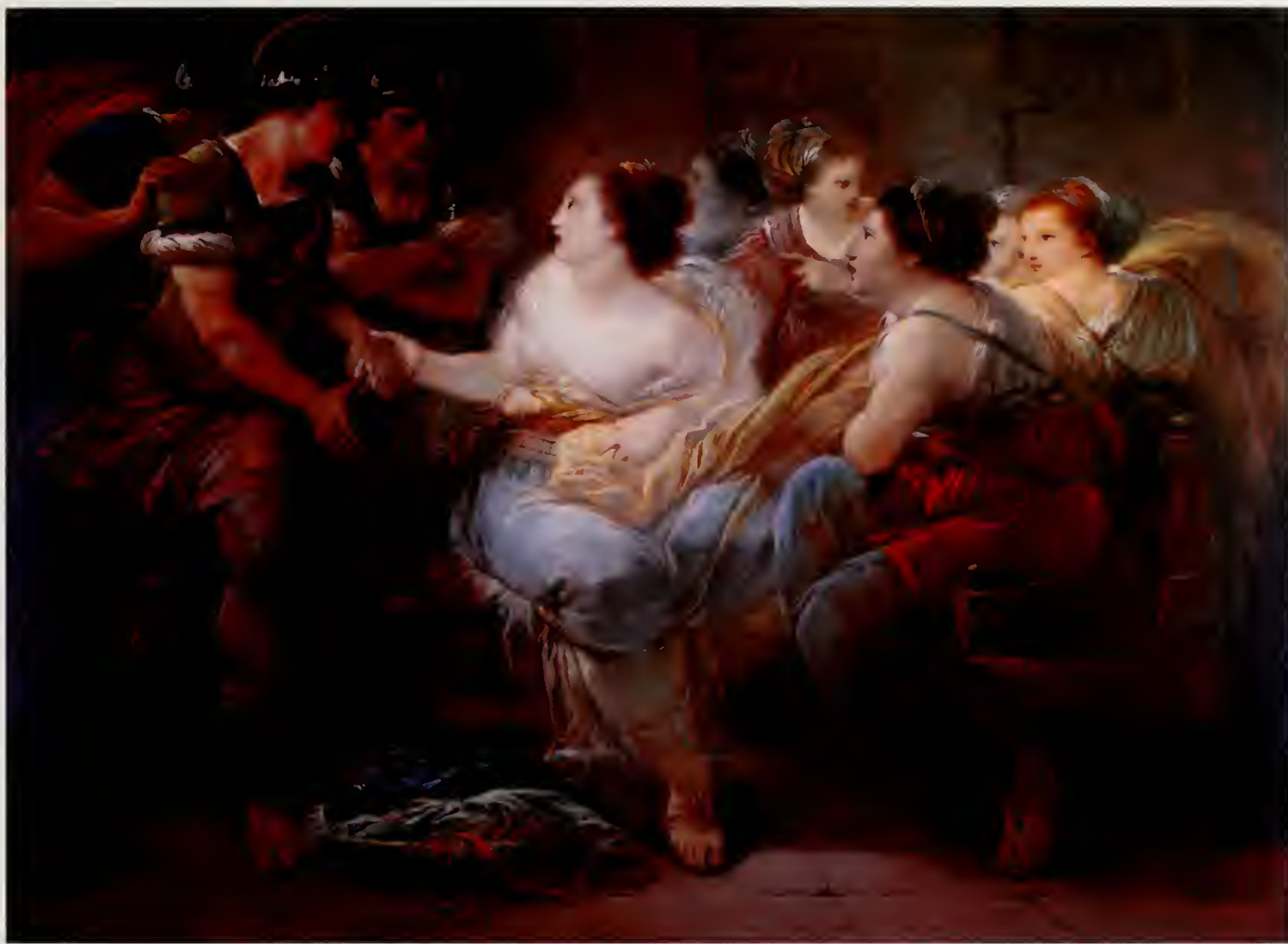


Fig. 3. Giuseppe Cades (Italian [Rome], 1750–1799), *The Virtue of Lucretia*, about 1774–82. Oil on canvas, 99 x 135 cm (39 x 53 1/8 in.). Toledo Museum of Art, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 2000.29.



Fig. 4. Jacques-Louis David (French, 1748–1825), *The Oath of the Horatii*, 1786. Oil on canvas, 130.2 x 166.7 cm (51 1/4 x 65 1/8 in.). Toledo Museum of Art, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1950.308.

Lucretia: The Virtuous Wife

Cades's portrayal of Lucretia, the virtuous heroine of ancient Rome celebrated for her fidelity and marital chastity, stands out in the art historical tradition. According to Roman legend, the events took place during the reign of the last Etruscan king of Rome, Tarquinius Superbus, in the sixth century B.C.E. Lucretia was raped by Sextus Tarquinius, the king's son. Preferring death to dishonor, Lucretia committed suicide after relating the traumatic event to her husband and father. Her kinsmen, led by Lucius Junius Brutus, avenged Lucretia by overthrowing the Tarquin rulers and establishing the Roman Republic: her husband Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus and his cousin Brutus became the first elected consuls of the new Republic. Significantly, for the Toledo canvas Cades chose an episode that is rarely treated in Italian painting. Instead of showing Lucretia's rape or suicide, the artist depicts an earlier moment in the narrative when her husband Collatinus, in the company of Sextus Tarquinius (also his

cousin) and a third warrior, surprise Lucretia working late into the night with her handmaidens to make garments for the soldiers on the battlefield. The soldiers were previously boasting about the virtue of their respective brides and decided to devise a test. The unexpected visit established Lucretia's virtue and fidelity as greater than the other wives'. The surprise encounter, however, sparked the ill-fated lust in the heart of Sextus Tarquinius, whom Cades depicts leering with envy at Lucretia's beauty.

The episode derives primarily from two famous ancient literary sources: Ovid's *Fasti* (2.685–852), an elegiac poem that celebrates the revised Roman calendar, and Livy's *Early History of Rome* (1.57–58). Livy's account provides the essential narrative sequence. The soldiers, boasting about the virtue of their respective wives during a break in the fighting, devise a scheme to test their conduct:

Arriving there at early dusk, they thence proceeded to Collatia, where Lucretia was discovered very differently employed from the daughters-in-law of the king. These they had seen at a luxurious banquet, whiling away the time with their young friends: but Lucretia, though it was late at night, was busily engaged upon her wool, while her maidens toiled about her in the lamplight as she sat in the hall of her house. The prize of this contest in womanly virtues fell to Lucretia.¹⁹

Considered in the context of this passage, Cades's painting faithfully depicts Lucretia and her handmaidens making wool cloaks for the soldiers. Yet it is likely that the artist glossed Livy's detailed narrative with Ovid's poetic description of the events. Ovid focuses on the "baskets full of soft wool" next to Lucretia's bed, a detail that Cades displays in the foreground of his painting.²⁰ The *Fasti* also emphasizes the element of surprise when Lucretia's husband rushes in as she sits worrying about his safety. The words, "Fear not, I've come," exclaimed by Collatinus in the *Fasti*, seem to issue from his lips in Cades's painting.²¹ The clasped hands of Collatinus and Lucretia is a gesture of *concordia* (union) that derives from ancient Roman art. The seated pose of

the handmaiden at the center right also resembles the form of the *Crouching Venus*, a famous antique statue known in several versions in and around Rome. Despite these classical motifs and stories, the artist is not interested in archaeological accuracy, seeking mostly to evoke an antique feel embellished with pictorial ornament: the men's armor, the women's loose draperies, the elegant sandals, and the carved garlands on the walls.

Cades offers a fresh interpretation of the legend that tinges theatricality with irony. Livy writes that Sextus Tarquinius was aroused as much by Lucretia's chastity as by her beauty. In the painting his gaze interrupts the blissful yet fleeting union of husband and wife and allows the beholder to meditate upon the pathos of beauty enhanced by impending tragedy. The startled expression of Lucretia's handmaiden at the center right intensifies the moment while simultaneously foreshadowing the shock and horror of rape in the minds of the viewer. The overarching theme is the power of virtue adorned by beauty to provoke desire.

Responding to the challenge of portraying female loveliness, Cades indulged in a pageant of differing ideals of beauty as established in the works of famous painters. Among them we can detect Veronese for the young maiden with red hair and warm flesh tones at the extreme right; a combination of Giulio Romano's robust classicism and Poussin's formal elegance for the maiden in strict profile; Correggio's softness for the maiden pointing in the background; and Guercino's sensuality for Lucretia. Cades's virtuosity captivates his audience as much as his beautiful subjects.

The art historian Luigi Lanzi celebrated the artist for his facility at imitating the manners of leading artists, both past and present. In 1809 he asserted that no one could better "improvise the physiognomy, the nude body, the drapery, and the entire character of every celebrated draftsman,"

adding that Cades "sometimes displayed as many different styles in a picture as there were figures."²² *The Virtue of Lucretia* is a prime example of how Cades assimilates the pictorial language of a variety of masters into his own art. The practice of assembling a variety of beautiful models into a single work was popularized in antiquity with the story of the painter Zeuxis, who, in order to represent Helen of Troy, combined features of five of the most beautiful women of Croton. Cades's imitative strategy more appropriately corresponds to what the German art historian and advocate of ancient art Johann Joachim Winckelmann prescribed in his *Reflections on the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Ancient Greeks*. According to Winckelmann, the great classicizing artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from Raphael and Michelangelo to Poussin, played an intermediary role between the ancients, whose art was considered beyond imitation, and the moderns. Such modern artists were seen as successful "surrogates" of the antique canon—the true source of beauty—and worthy of imitation themselves because their art was more accessible and immediate.²³ Considering the patron of *The Virtue of Lucretia*, it is significant, too, that Gamelin copied paintings by Guercino, Guido Reni, and Domenichino for the baron de Puymaurin's collection.²⁴

Achilles: The Proud, Beautiful Hero

The emphasis on virtue and beauty in the Toledo painting unfolds in the context of the Louvre *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*. The baron de Puymaurin most likely displayed these two works side by side in the Hôtel d'Assézat, offering a didactic confrontation of admired female and male personalities from Roman and Greek history. In Homer's *Iliad* (9.169–202), Achilles stopped battling the Trojans because his beautiful captive, Briseis, was unfairly taken from him by Agamemnon. When the tide of the war turned in favor of the Trojans, Agamemnon



Fig. 5. Giuseppe Cades (Italian [Rome], 1750–1799), *The Rape of Lucretia*, about 1795. Pen and dark brown and black inks with brush and brown wash, over black chalk, on ivory laid paper, 43.5 x 27.6 cm (17 ¹/₈ x 10 ¹¹/₁₆ in.). Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago; Leonora Hall Gurley Memorial Collection, 1922.648. Photograph © 2002, The Art Institute of Chicago, All Rights Reserved.



Fig. 6. Titian (Italian [Venice], about 1490–1576), *The Rape of Lucretia*, about 1570. Oil on canvas, 188.9 x 145.4 cm (74 ³/₈ x 57 ¹/₄ in.). Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Inv. 914.



Fig. 7. Giuseppe Maria Crespi (Italian [Bologna], 1665–1747), *Tarquin and Lucretia*, about 1690–1700. Oil on canvas 195 x 171.3 cm (76 ³/₄ x 67 ¹/₂ in.). Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection, 1952.5.30.(PA)842.



Fig. 8. Giuseppe Cades (Italian [Rome], 1750–1799), *The Death of Lucretia*, 1788. Pen and black ink, brown wash, heightened with white, on paper, 34.0 x 47.0 cm (13 1/8 x 18 1/2 in.). Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, K.d.Z 18584.

decided to negotiate with Achilles. The ambassadors of Agamemnon—Ulysses, Ajax, and Phoenix—found Achilles in his tent with his companion Patroclus. The passage related to the events portrayed by Cades reads as follows:

[...] they found Achilles delighting in his lyre, clear-sounding, splendid and carefully wrought, with a bridge of silver upon it, which he won out of the spoils when he ruined Eetion's city. With this he was pleasuring his heart, and singing of men's fame, as Patroclus was sitting over against him, alone, in silence, watching [Achilles] and the time he would leave off singing. Now these two came forward, as brilliant Ulysses led them, and stood in his presence. (*Iliad* 9.186–93)²⁵

As with his portrayal of Lucretia, Cades represents a private moment in the narrative of the hero Achilles. He sets the scene within the luxurious interior of Achilles's tent. The ambassadors interrupt the hero while he is at leisure, absorbed in music alongside his companion. The interruption occurs at night, and in a motif that echoes his *Virtue of Lucretia*, Cades bathes Achilles in a beaming white light.

Cades imitates Homer's description of the lyre as an exotic detail worthy of artistic embellishment in both poetry and painting. In the 1770s Melchiorre Cesarotti and Vincenzo Monti, members of the Accademia dell'Arcadia, were working on Italian translations of Homer's epics. The force



Fig. 9. Gavin Hamilton (British, 1723–1798), *The Death of Lucretia*, 1767. Oil on canvas, 213.2 x 264.0 cm (84 x 104 in.). New Haven, Conn., Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, B1981.25.318.

of Homer's poetry presented a spur to the imagination and challenged artists from the Renaissance onward to rival in paint his copiousness of invention and expressive energy. Cades complements the sensuous features of Achilles with his silken robes and fur-covered stool. Note, too, how Achilles rests his small and elegant foot next to a pile of fabric and musical instruments instead of on the trappings of war. Winckelmann, along with other art critics, promoted the idea of beautiful masculinity with reference to ancient statuary on display in Rome. He praised the sleek-limbed Apollo Belvedere over the powerful Farnese Hercules for its "charming manliness" and "soft tenderness."²⁶ Rather than showing a brawny hero in action, Cades portrays Achilles as delicate, almost effeminate. This is also in accord with the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, whose *Symposium* (5.104–7) identifies Achilles as the "beloved" of Patroclus—beardless and the fairer of the two.²⁷

The Glamour of Virtue and Honor

Together, Cades's *The Virtue of Lucretia* and *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon* invite spectators to contemplate traditional female and male exemplars of virtue and honor. Both canvases explore the conflict between love and patriotism. Lucretia's domestic labor serves a greater good—her weaving aids her husband and other soldiers on the battlefield while simultaneously demonstrating her chastity. By contrast, Achilles is the epitome of the wronged man—a victim of Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis. His dereliction of duty comes, appropriately, in the context of his own desire for a woman—his "prize of honor." His stubborn defiance may be seen as the antithesis to the glamour of Lucretia's virtue. In Book 9 of the *Iliad*, Achilles rejects the pleas of the ambassadors and announces that he will sail for home. He furthermore questions the whole Greek code of honor, loathing the shameful act of King Agamemnon, rejecting the quest for fame, and exclaiming that life matters more than wealth or reputation: "For not worth the value of my life are all the possessions they fable were won for Ilium" (9.400–2). As the *Iliad* relates, Achilles only returns to combat after his companion Patroclus answers the call to arms and dies in battle. The opposite is true for Lucretia who, as a matron of ancient Roman society, committed suicide to preserve her reputation as an unwilling victim and not bring scandal upon her family. Though without blame in the eyes of her husband and father, Lucretia desired that no adulteress could use her as an excuse to live without shame. Before stabbing herself, as Livy relates, she exclaims: "not in time to come shall ever unchaste women live through the example of Lucretia."²⁸

Cades's representations of Lucretia and Achilles contributed to the newly emerging cultural interpretations of history and myth as metaphors of human condition. In eighteenth-century France, for example, a general shift was occurring



Fig. 10. Giuseppe Cades (Italian [Rome], 1750–1799), *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*, 1774. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, heightened with white, on sized paper, 36.1 x 51.0 cm (14 ¹/₄ x 20 ¹/₈ in.). Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, Inv. 2948. Photo RMN: Michele Bellot. Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY.



Fig. 11. Giuseppe Cades (Italian [Rome], 1750–1799), *Achilles and Briseis*, 1776. Pen and black ink, gray wash, and black chalk, heightened with white, on paper, 41 x 66 cm (16 ¹/₈ x 26 in.). Montpellier, Musée Fabre, Inv. 877.1.8.

from the portrayal of overtly erotic subjects, epitomized by François Boucher's pictorial celebrations of playful nymphs and lovers, to the appreciation of historical narratives that embody moralizing messages and lessons of virtue.²⁹ In 1747, La Font de Saint-Yenne commended the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to painters as important iconographical sources, and later he acknowledged the moral value of history painting when it treats the virtuous and heroic actions of men and women as discovered in ancient sources.³⁰ In fact, a number of eighteenth-century French artists successfully treated the subject of Lucretia, with Jean-Jacques Lagrenée presenting *The Sons of Tarquin Admiring the Virtue of Lucretia* at the 1781 Paris Salon.³¹ In addition, the French art critic Denis Diderot applauded dramatic paintings in which the characters were so absorbed in their actions, specifically during a moment of crisis, that the narrative composition effectively denied the presence of a beholder.³² Arguably the greatest product of this thought was Jacques-Louis David's *Oath of the Horatii*, a work that he primarily executed and displayed in Rome before shipping it to Paris in 1785. David's reduced version of this famous composition, ordered by the comte de Vaudreuil and signed and dated 1786, is in the Toledo Museum of Art (Fig. 4).³³

The crisis over history painting that occurred in France did not develop to the same degree in Rome. Allegorical presentations of ancient themes dominated Rome throughout the eighteenth century. Cades expanded the Roman tradition by providing an intellectual investigation into the meaning of historical discourse with an emphasis on the personal emotions of his protagonists.³⁴ The complicated play of emotions in the baron de Puymaurin's pictures appeals to the sentiment, what we tend to associate most with the art of the eighteenth century. Absorption, too, fills the pictures, as Lucretia and Achilles shift from being engrossed in weaving and music to being mesmerized by their intruders. No one looks out at us. Both works contribute to an open discourse on the self that would have appealed to the baron de Puymaurin.

The Drawings: Violence, Vengeance, and Irony

There are no known preparatory drawings for the Toledo and Louvre pictures. Nevertheless, Cades executed a number of highly finished drawings related to the themes of Lucretia and Achilles throughout his career. He created these drawings for the open market as independent works of art. In 1785 the art historical journal *Memorie per le Belle Arti* discussed Cades's remarkable ability to forge drawings of the style of old masters.³⁵ The following examples, while not forgeries, broaden the context of the themes explored in his two paintings by offering very modern and progressive stylistic statements.

Let us begin with *The Rape of Lucretia* now in the Art Institute of Chicago (Fig. 5).³⁶ Though undated, this superb drawing relates closely to another drawing of the same subject, which is signed and dated by Cades in 1795 (Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen).³⁷ For the Chicago drawing, the artist applies an even brown wash punctuated by exuberant pen lines to express contour and details. Note the flurry of Lucretia's hair that spills onto the pillow and blends into its design. The graphic flourishes around the abandoned sword and drapery at the lower left even trail off into the calligraphy of Cades's signature. A robust classicism governs the entire composition. Even though Cades learned much from Corvi's anatomical drawing lessons, the voluptuous body of Lucretia conveys his appreciation of the Venetian artist Titian (about 1490–1576). The artist darkens the face of Sextus Tarquinius in shadow to make him more ominous, much in the manner he appears in Toledo's *Virtue of Lucretia*.

In addition to Livy and Ovid, such ancient and early Christian authors as Dio Cassius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Valerius Maximus, and Saint Augustine all wrote about Lucretia's rape and suicide. From the fifteenth century onward artists including Raphael and Titian saw the rape and suicide of Lucretia as rhetorically complex

themes worthy of pictorial representation.³⁸ Cades certainly knew of Titian's famous *Rape of Lucretia* of about 1570 (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Fig. 6) through the engraving by Cornelius Cort made in 1571. It is also possible he was aware of Giuseppe Maria Crespi's *Tarquin and Lucretia*, painted about 1690–1700 and now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington (Fig. 7), which is the earliest known painting to show Tarquin silencing Lucretia.³⁹ The gesture refers to Sextus Tarquinius's threat to murder Lucretia and a servant and posthumously accuse them of adultery if she does not submit to his advances. In Livy, Sextus Tarquinius says: "Be still, Lucretia! I am Sextus Tarquinius. My sword is in my hand. Utter a sound, and you die!" (1.58). Cades imbues his drawing with emotional power and poignant theatricality. Naked and vulnerable, Lucretia signifies innocence and beauty. She desperately tries to fight off her aggressor, who in his military gear and with raised dagger signifies virility and violence.

The Death of Lucretia by Cades, a drawing signed and dated 1788, shows the suicide of Lucretia after the fact, as her kinsmen pledge to avenge her death (Fig. 8).⁴⁰ We see her father raising his arms in anguish while her husband swoons from grief into the arms of Brutus and his companions. Now in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, this particular drawing was originally owned by the Roman sculptor Vincenzo Pacetti, a close friend of Cades. It reveals the artist's continued reflection on the theme of Lucretia's virtue. Moreover, in 1779, his painting titled *Lucretia, a Roman Lady, Dying in the Arms of Her Father and Her Husband While Brutus, Holding the Dagger with which She Has Struck Herself, Swears to Avenge Her Death* (whereabouts unknown) was exhibited at the Société des Beaux-Arts in Montpellier by M. Boudet.⁴¹ This last work certainly relates to the Toledo canvas and the Berlin drawing, and testifies to the artist's varied approaches to his subject. Caracciolo suggests that Cades studied the

engraving by Domenico Cunego of Gavin Hamilton's famous painting *The Death of Lucretia* (1767) (Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven; Fig. 9).⁴² Hamilton shows Lucius Junius Brutus, the male hero, vowing revenge on the Tarquins: he is the agent of action. Cades, however, emphasizes Lucretia's act. The complex narrative connects Lucretia with her family and the future of the country. The soldiers in the background seem to pledge directly to Lucretia's dead body. Furthermore, Cades shows Collatinus rendered helpless and ineffective, swooning into the arms of Brutus and other soldiers. Lucretia's self-sacrifice to avoid shame and preserve her virtue prompted Ovid to declare her a matron of manly courage (*animi matrona virilis* 2.847).

The discrepancy between male and female roles as expressed through body language is also at the heart of Cades's graphic representations of Achilles. The artist's ability to focus attention upon questions of emotion and character is central to understanding his narratives of Greek myth and their reception in the eighteenth century. The Louvre drawing of *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*, dated 1774, most likely represents the artist's earliest depiction of the subject (Fig. 10).⁴³ Its slightly worn condition does not detract from its beauty. Unlike the painting, Achilles appears muscular and powerful. The close-knit composition connects Achilles to the ambassadors both spatially and physically. The surprised look on the hero's face, along with his tensed muscles, renders him more alert than does his languid demeanor in the Paris painting. Fresh and spontaneous, the drawing reads like an epic encounter instead of a domestic interruption. The comte Grimod d'Orsay purchased this work during his stay in Rome from 1775 to 1778, demonstrating the artist's appeal to French connoisseurs.

Cades's *Achilles and Briseis*, one of his greatest graphic inventions and the last work to be discussed here, is signed and dated 1776 (Fig. 11).⁴⁴ It shows the moment when Patroclus hands over Briseis to Agamemnon's heralds, Nestor and Ulysses (*Iliad* 1.345–56), causing Achilles great emotional anguish. The artist worked up the drawing to a high degree of finish that imitates bas-relief, complete with tints and highlights for modeling. The quick parallel strokes that delineate muscle definition agree with the technique employed in the Toledo *Virtue of Lucretia*. A *pentimento* (a revision) is visible behind the leg of the ambassador to the far right. Cades mixes the abstract elegance of Parmigianino's sinuous lines with the robust expression of the body characteristic of Baroque art. There is very little distinction between male and female forms. As in the representations of Achilles discussed above, he appears without armor. Even the hair of Patroclus, seated in the center, curls like decorative ribbons. Cades portrays Achilles as conveying all-too-human emotions while lamenting with outstretched arms the loss of his beloved. What is described as a serious event in the *Iliad* is treated by Cades with irony and humor: the inflated drama lightens the intensity of the narrative. One of the powerful heralds even clutches Briseis with both arms as she weeps and seemingly begs to stay. The mixture of tragedy and comedy corresponds to the study of these genres in Gioacchino Pizzi's *Ragionamento sulla tragica e comica poesia*, published in Rome in 1772. Ultimately, this drawing possesses the qualities treasured most by connoisseurs from the eighteenth century to the present day: a freshness and vitality of expression coupled with technical brilliance.

Notes

Maria Teresa Caracciolo, Lawrence W. Nichols, Marc S. Gerstein, and Sandra E. Knudsen all provided valuable comments on this publication.

¹ Anthony Clark, "An Introduction to the Drawings of Giuseppe Cades," *Master Drawings* 2 (1964): 18–26. Clark also wrote the first modern critical biography of the artist in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 16 (1973), s.v. "Cades, Giuseppe," pp. 72–78.

² Luigi Lanzi, *Storia pittorica della Italia dal risorgimento delle belle arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo* (1809) (reprint, Florence: Sansoni, 1968), vol. 1, p. 422: "Il Cades dee raccomandarsi alla storia principalmente per un talento d'imitazione pericoloso alla società [...]."

³ Maria Teresa Caracciolo, *Giuseppe Cades (1750–1799) et la Rome de son temps* (Paris: Arthéna, 1992); eadem, "Giuseppe Cades (1750–1799): L'expérience française d'un peintre romain," *Revue du Louvre* 5/6 (1984): 353–58; eadem, "Storia antica e mitologia nell'arte di Giuseppe Cades," *Quaderni sul Neoclassico* 4 (1978): 73–84; and eadem, "Per Giuseppe Cades," *Arte illustrata* 6 (1973): 2–14. Additional publications are cited below.

⁴ Edgar Peters Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*, exh. cat., eds. Edgar Peters Bowron and Joseph J. Rishel (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2000), p. 298. See also the entries on Cades's works by Maria Teresa Caracciolo.

⁵ *Painting in Italy in the Eighteenth Century: Rococo to Romanticism*, exh. cat., eds. John Maxon and Joseph J. Rishel (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1970).

⁶ Cited in Clark (1973) (above n. 1), p. 76.

⁷ Biographical information on Cades is found in Clark (1973) (above n. 1), pp. 72–78; and Caracciolo (1992) (above n. 3), passim.

⁸ Lanzi (above n. 2), p. 423.

⁹ Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844), the Danish sculptor and connoisseur who began an extended sojourn in Rome in 1797, acquired Cades's notebook and drawings, for which see Maria Teresa Caracciolo, "Un album di Giuseppe Cades appunti di viaggio e disegni," *Meddelelser fra Thorvaldsens Museum* (1978): 7–47.

¹⁰ Quoted in Caracciolo (1992) (above n. 3), p. 74: "Raccomandai se non m'inganno quando fui a Bergamo l'ultima volta un certo Giuseppe Cades il migliore che lasciai a Roma, di questo vengo a ricevere due quadri adiscatili precisamente per me, che sono due gioielli, il Presepio è ammirabile, non ho veduto da quello di Dresda in fuori cosa più bella, questo sarebbe il solo capace di riparare la perdita del Batoni."

¹¹ For an overview of the culture in Rome in the eighteenth century, see Liliana Barroero and Stefano Susinno, "Arcadian Rome, Universal Capital of the Arts," in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* (above n. 4), pp. 47–75.

¹² See A. L. Bellini and C. Caruso, "Oltre il Barocco: La fondazione dell'Arcadia," in *Storia della letteratura italiana: Il Settecento* (Rome: Salerno, 1998), vol. 6, pp. 239–312; and Maria Teresa Acquaro Graziosi, *L'Arcadia, trecento anni di storia* (Rome: Fratelli Palombi, 1991).

¹³ A detailed discussion of these two paintings and their early history is found in Maria Teresa Caracciolo's entries in *Les collectionneurs toulousains du XVIII^e siècle: L'Académie royale de peinture, sculpture et architecture*, exh. cat. (Paris: Somogy, 2001), pp. 198–99; eadem (1992) (above n. 3), pp. 56–58; 186–88; eadem (1984) (above n. 3), pp. 353–58; and eadem (1978) (above n. 3), pp. 74–77.

¹⁴ Robert Mesuret, *Les expositions de l'Académie Royale de Toulouse de 1751 à 1791* (Toulouse: Espic, 1972), esp. pp. 524–25; and idem, "La collection du Baron de Puymaurin en 1792," *L'Aut* (1948), pp. 3–11.

¹⁵ Information on the baron de Puymaurin's life is found in the preface to Henri David, *J. Gamelin sa vie et son oeuvre (1738–1802)* (Auch: Société Anonyme Th. Bouquet, 1928).

¹⁶ On Gamelin, see David (above n. 15); and *Jacques Gamelin*, exh. cat. (Paris: Joseph Hahn, 1979).

¹⁷ Mesuret (1972) (above n. 14), p. 275.

¹⁸ Though the Florentine paintings are undated, these pictures, together with the Toledo and Louvre canvases, share characteristics with Cades's *Ecstasy of Saint Joseph of Copertino* (Basilica of Santi Apostoli, Rome), executed in 1777.

¹⁹ Livy, *History of Rome*, trans. B. O. Foster, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1919).

²⁰ Ovid, *Fasti*, trans. James Frazer, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 2.742: "ante torum calathi lanaque mollis erat."

²¹ Ibid., 2.779: "pone metum, veni!"

²² Lanzi (above n. 2), pp. 422–24: "Non vi è stato falsator di caratteri così esperto in contraffare i tratti e le piegature di 24 lettere, com'egli contraffaceva, anche all'improvviso, le fisionomie, il nudo, il panneggiamento, tutto esattamente il carattere d'ogni più lodato disegnatore"; "[...] presentava ancora talvolta in un quadro tante imitazioni di maestri diversi, quant'eran figure."

²³ Michael Fried, "Antiquity Now: Reading Winckelmann on Imitation," *October* 37 (1986): 87–98.

²⁴ David (above n. 15), p. xviii.

²⁵ *The 'Iliad' of Homer*, trans. Richmond Lattimore (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1951).

²⁶ The quotations are from Winckelmann's *History of the Art of Antiquity* (1776), as cited and discussed by Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 118. On the concept of the beautiful male body in eighteenth-century painting, see also Chloe Chard, "Effeminacy, Pleasure and the Classical Body," in *Femininity and Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture*, eds. Gill Perry and Michael Rossington (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 142–61; and Thomas Crow, "Revolutionary Activism and the Cult of Male Beauty in the Studio of David," in *Fictions of the French Revolution*, ed. Bernadette Fort (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991), pp. 55–85.

²⁷ The passage from Plato is cited and discussed by Crow (above n. 26), p. 68, n. 28. The subject of *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon* was the competition piece for the 1801 Prix de Rome, won by Ingres for his masterful rendition of the subject (now in the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris). Carol Ockman explores the homoerotic implications of Ingres's work in her article "Profiling Homocroticism: Ingres's *Achilles Receiving the Ambassadors of Agamemnon*," *The Art Bulletin* 85 (1993): 259–74.

²⁸ Livy, 1.58.10: "nec ulla deinde inpudica Lucretiae exemplo vivet." In his *Roman History*, Dio Cassius stated that Sextus Tarquinius desired to ruin Lucretia's reputation more than her body. Furthermore, Augustine's *City of God* criticizes Lucretia's suicide as an act of self-murder, that is, a sin.

²⁹ See Robert Rosenblum, *Transformations in Late Eighteenth Century Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967); and Dorothy Johnson, "Myth and Meaning: Mythological Painting in France circa 1800," in *Frankreich 1800: Gesellschaft, Kultur, Mentalitäten* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1990), pp. 23–33.

³⁰ Discussed by Rosenblum (above n. 29), pp. 55–56.

³¹ Henry Bardon, "Les peintures à sujets antiques du XVIIIème siècle d'après les livrets de Salons," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 61 (1963): 217–50, esp. p. 231.

³² On Diderot's art criticism, see Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and the Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

³³ The open debate over the attribution of this canvas to Jacques-Louis David or his pupil Anne-Louis Girodet is sensitively discussed by Joseph Rischel in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* (above n. 4), pp. 361–62.

³⁴ On the theme of the privatization of the hero, see Stefan Germer and Hubertus Kohle, "From the Theatrical to the Aesthetic Hero: On the Privatization of the Idea of Virtue in David's *Brutus* and *Sabines*," *Art History* 9 (1986): 168–84.

³⁵ Cited in Maria Teresa Caracciolo, "L'ispirazione letteraria di Giuseppe Cades," *Antologia di Belle Arti* 1 (1977): 246–65, esp. pp. 246–47.

³⁶ The drawing is discussed by Caracciolo (1992) (above n. 3), pp. 184–85; Roberta Olson, *Italian Drawings 1780–1890*, exh. cat. (New York: American Federation of the Arts, 1980), pp. 40–41; and Harold Joachim and Suzanne Folds McCullagh, *Italian Drawings in the Art Institute of Chicago* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1979), p. 91.

³⁷ See Maria Teresa Caracciolo's entry on Cades's Copenhagen drawing in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* (above n. 4), pp. 483–84.

³⁸ Two excellent studies on the impact of the legend of Lucretia on European culture are by Stephanie Jed, *Chaste Thinking: The Rape of Lucretia and the Birth of Humanism* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989); and Ian Donaldson, *The Rapes of Lucretia: A Myth and its Transformations* (Oxford: Clarendon University Press, 1982). Art historical studies on Lucretia in the Renaissance and beyond include Cristelle Baskins, '*Cassone*' *Painting, Humanism, and Gender in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 127–59; Patricia Emison, "The Singularity of Raphael's *Lucretia*," *Art History* 14 (1991): 372–96; and Norman Bryson, "Two Narratives of Rape in the Visual Arts: Lucretia and the Sabine Women," in *Rape in Art*, eds. Sylvia Tomaselli and Roy Porter (Oxford: Blackwell Press, 1986), pp. 152–73.

³⁹ Crespi's painting was originally in Bologna and may have been known to Cades through copies; see Diane De Grazia's entry in *Italian Paintings of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, eds. Diane De Grazia and Eric Garberson (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1996), pp. 71–76.

⁴⁰ Caracciolo (1992) (above n. 3), p. 303. Another version of this drawing exists by Cades in the Crocker Art Gallery, Sacramento.

⁴¹ The importance of this work in relation to Cades's paintings for the baron de Puymaurin was first discussed by Maria Teresa Caracciolo (1978) (above n. 3), p. 76.

⁴² Rosenblum (as in n. 29), p. 69; and Duncan Macmillan, "Woman as Hero: Gavin Hamilton's Radical Alternative," in *Femininity and Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture* (above n. 26), pp. 78–98.

⁴³ See Caracciolo (1992) (above n. 3), pp. 184–85; and her entries on the drawing in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* (above n. 4), pp. 480–81; and in *Les collectionneurs toulousains du XVIIIe siècle* (above n. 13), pp. 200–01.

⁴⁴ Caracciolo (1992) (above n. 3), p. 189. Another version by Cades was formerly on the art market.

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